

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A dependability system, comprising a hierarchical arrangement of two or more nodes each having a fault analyzer object programmed to respond to status information relating to an associated system of one or more objects based upon a respective set of policies designed to improve object availability.
2. The system of claim 1, wherein a first fault analyzer object is configured to report object status information to a second fault analyzer object.
3. The system of claim 2, wherein the first fault analyzer object is configured to register with the second fault analyzer object.
4. The system of claim 1, wherein a fault analyzer object is assigned responsibility for one or more component objects.
5. The system of claim 4, wherein the component objects correspond to software applications.
6. The system of claim 4, further comprising a component interface configured to connect the fault analyzer object to the one or more component objects.
7. The system of claim 6, wherein the fault analyzer object is configured to issue to the component interface object control instructions for changing the operational state of one or more of the component objects.
8. The system of claim 1, wherein each fault analyzer object is configured to determine the health of the assigned system.
9. The system of claim 8, wherein each fault analyzer includes logic in the form of a dynamic linked library for determining the health of the assigned system.
10. The system of claim 9, wherein each dynamic linked library is dynamically replaceable.



at a lower-level node, receiving status information relating to one or more component objects of a node in a hierarchical arrangement of two or more nodes;

at the lower-level node, issuing in response to the received status information a component object control instruction for controlling the operational state of one of the component objects based upon a respective set of policies designed to improve object availability; and

from the lower-level node, issuing a status report to a higher-level node in the hierarchical arrangement of nodes.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the status report issued by the lower-level node relates to the state of health of a lower-level component object.

22. The method of claim 20, wherein the status report issued by the lower-level node relates to the state of health of the lower-level node.

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